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# AMPAIGN

OF \* 20<sup>th</sup> 52.8263



**MRS. JULIA SILK,**

OF

**ANN ARBOR, MICH.,**

With a Concise Account of the Principal Events of the  
Rebellion of '61 to '65.





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# CAMPAIGN

—OF—

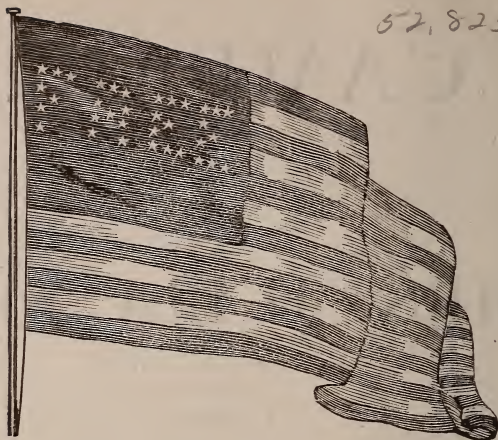
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With a concise account of the principal  
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Nobly our flag flutters o'er us to day  
Emblem of peace, pledge of Libertys' sway,  
Its foes shall tremble and shrink in dismay  
If ever insulted it be.

Our Stripes and Stars, loved and honoured by all,  
Shall float forever where Freedom may call.  
It shall still be the Flag of the Free,  
Emblem of sweet Liberty!

With it in beauty no flag can compare,  
All nations honor our banner so fair.  
If to insult it a traitor should dare,  
Crushed to the earth let him be!  
Freedom and Progress our watchword today;  
When duty call, who dares disobey?  
Honor to thee, thou Flag of the Free,  
Emblem of sweet Liberty.

20th Regt Sd  
Feb. 8, 1902

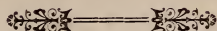


## **Preface.**

In laying the History of my Campaign before the public, I have not indulged in learned dissertations, my common old fashioned education being too limited to give that clasical finish to the work which a learned writer would have done. Indeed it has not been my intention to write a book for the learned of critical, but to give to the public a volume written in a homely style to instruct and interest the family and the common reader as well as my comrades. If in my brief narrative I have omitted to pay proper respect to gallant patriots it is because I know that history will supply the deficiency. It has been my object to select the most important events of my Campaign and to describe them in a plain and familiar style.



# § A WOMAN'S CAMPAIGN §



The beautifully sculptured monuments of liberty and independence which victory and success have placed in our cities and on our hills were not won without the blood being spilled from the hearts of hundreds of our truest and noblest forefathers; who remembers today the sufferings of those brave soldiers who fought for right and independence—bright beacons of progress and success are shining all around us, wealth and civilization are rapidly advancing and we seldom if ever stop to think of 61. Nevertheless there are still a great many living who possess knowledge of certain facts which our histories have never made known. Most of the data in this pamphlet is doubtless familiar to my readers, but there are a great many incidents in it which will be new and interesting and it will doubtless be a novel sensation to read a woman's campaign, but if the impression is not unpleasant, I am content.

I will commence by saying that my circumstances in life were very moderate, and I was only too pleased to lend my humble assistance for whatever remuneration might be chosen for me.

My husband had enlisted in Detroit in the Illinois, 23rd. volunteer under Col. Mulligan. In the year 62 he was

camping with the regiment at Camp Douglas in Chicago, where today towers the beautiful monument of Stephen Douglas. The regiment was guarding twenty thousand rebel prisoners captured at the Isle No. 10. In June his regiment received orders to go front.

I was living at that time in Ann Arbor, Mich., and I decided to go and see my husband before he left Chicago fearing this might be the last time I should look on his living face. On my arrival seeing those poor soldiers looking so shabby and miserable, I concluded to stay and make myself useful. I camped with my husband during two weeks at the same time washing and cooking for the sick in the Hospital.

The regiment again received orders to go South to Annapolis, Ind.

I either had to go back to Ann Arbor or follow the regiment I thereupon seen Col. Mulligan and asked him permission to follow my husband, he replied I might go but must leave my little girl behind who was then fourteen months old, and that apart my services would be very acceptable.

I looked at my baby so young and at my husband who perhaps might fall and I knew no one would give him the care I should; on the other hand my mother was living and very willing to take charge of my baby and was worthy of my trust, I decided I could better effort to leave my baby than my husband, I returned home having told him I would join him at his next stopping place.

Col. Mulligan had given me a letter to the quarter master demanding a transportation whenever I was prepared to return; which was given me at once for Virginia. On arriving at Annapolis the regiment had received orders to return to Camp Jessie on the Potomac.

Gen. McDowell was commander at Annapolis, he received me kindly and invited me to dinner which I readily accepted as my journey was beginning to tell on my appetite. The Gen. was loud in his praise of me, he was surprised and pleased that I should be willing to sacrifice the comforts of home, no matter how humble, for the privations and misery of the Camp for the sake of charity and patriotism; that afternoon I took the train and joined my husband in Camp Jessie. There were over forty thousand soldiers camping there. I went to the provost Marshal and inquired for the 23rd. Illinois regiment, and as there had been a number of rebel women in the camp entrance was forbidden unless satisfactorily identified; he asked me whom I knew in the regiment.

—My husband, Thomas Silk, I answered, of Company I. Lieut. Ryan being present spoke up:

—That is my company, Mrs. Silk, I will escort you to your husband; God must have sent you to us, as we are in need of nurses very badly.

When we arrived at the camp the word went around: "Here is the nurse for Company I." I was soon made welcome and provided with a tent for myself; here began my campaign and plenty work with it.

Rebel Gen. O'Neil with his band of Gurella, containing eighteen thousand had just made a raid on the railroad which proved quite a battle and in consequence there were many dead and wounded to care for. I was the only woman in our company while others were provided with three and four, each company being allowed four nurses.

In our regiment were a number of prisoners captured at Isle Number Ten most of whom took the oath of loyalty to the stars and stripes and joined the regiment, but a number were still very bitter towards the North. On a

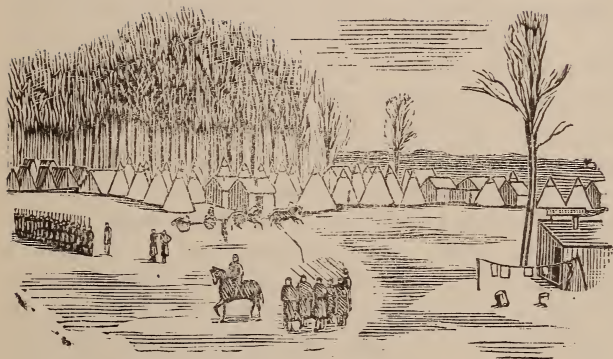


certain occasion, I remember hearing two soldiers quarrelling about a canteen of whiskey, one was Northern the other was formerly a Southerner, the latter stabbed the former in the side; this was the first blood I seen spilled; I shall never live long enough to forget the scene, a human life for a canteen of whiskey, he was carried to the camp on a stretcher. Our regiment was a catholic one and was provided with a Roman Catholic Priest, Father Butler; he had been absent but arrived just in time to administer to him his last sacraments and sustain his dying moments with comforting words. His assassin was put in the guard house; I never heard what his sentence was.

The first time I heard the beating of the long roll, I felt about large enough to crawl through a rat hole; when it first sounded, the soldiers were all over, some of them washing their shirts at the river, others picking berries, some playing cards, but with one accord they would all start for their guns. In less than ten minutes full thirty thousand men were ready to march on the enemy with all their accoutrements. The sight made my blood turn cold; every step seemed to take my husband further from me and I seemed to look on him for the last time alive; but on seeing him return home safe after several battles, I grew accustomed to the long roll business and finally thought no more of seeing him take his gun to fight the rebels than if he was merely taking his coat to go to his days labor and as they would start for battle the physicians and ambulance would follow for the dead and wounded while at the Hospital beds were being laid for the return of the ambulance which was sure to be filled.

To describe our camp, it was quiet and peaceful, when bad news was not heard from the enemy our tents were laid out just as artistically as the streets in our cities to







day and our surroundings kept just as clean and in order the soldiers went through their daily routine of drill in the morning and dress parade in the afternoon at nine oclock p. m. roll call lights out immediately after reveille in the morning at five oclock; each one who had been detailed the night previous to relieve the pickets were on duty by eight oclock.

About the 20th. Sept. we were on marching orders for Charksburg, Vir.; we left our beautiful little home to which I had become quite attached, with many regrets but in less than fifteen minutes there was not a sign of human habitation visible, everything was piled on the cars and transported men and women to our next stopping; we were in open cars and the rain poured down on us with an unceasing vengeance during the whole journey, finally reaching our destination in the evening, we painfully disembarked, marched about half a mile from the cars and pitched our tents on the side hill, it looked so uninviting in the wet and mud, I looked for a pleasanter abode; at a distance of about a hundred yards I saw a pretty white house; I decided to seek quarters there. When I reached it the door was wide open; I walked bravely in. It was richly furnished and the table was spread for supper. My mind ran back to fairy tales which I had heard read in my childhood, but I will not decieve my reader, I will explain my fortune here. The house had been tenanted by secesh who on seeing our approach fled from the yankee's horns, taking nothing with them but their fastest horses, as quickly as possible over the mountains. I accordingly made myself at home and gently took possession of the house, reigning queen of all I surveyed. The table was laid with the best of the season; I gathered everything up and fed to the pigs in the pen, if anything contained

poison they should feel it first; the house was surrounded with a garden filled with ripe vegetables and fruits of all kinds; I gathered fresh of everything and prepared a supper fit for the queen. When all was ready and the table spread with the best the house afforded, I went to the Camp and invited the officers and their wives to dine at my hotel which was to be run on a very elaborate scale. They readily accepted my invitation and were soon seated at the table, twenty eight in number. We had a lively time after supper with singing and music, (the house contained a fine piano) and we enjoyed ourselves immensely. Such was the entree in my fine quarters. After my guests had taken their leave of me, I gathered all the silverware—there was a quantity sufficient to purchase the largest farm in Virgiana—and placed it between the featherbed and mattress of a sleeping room and locked the door for safe keeping, for which I was heartily thanked when the people of the house mustered up sufficient courage to return and see what had become of their cozy little home.

I remained there for three weeks and took care of the chickens, pigs and cows, when one morning I looked out of the door and to my great surprise I see coming towards the gate three ladies and one gentleman on horseback. I cannot say who were frightened the most, they or myself, we were afraid of each other; however they asked if they might come in, "Yes, if you are not armed and wo'nt kill anybody," I answered. My fear was gradually lessening, I asked them what they wanted, they said they owned this house before the Yankees took possession of it. I said: "Come in and welcome and take possession of your own house, we will all walk out, since I am here, I have protected the surroundings and fed the cattle; I helped myself to your garden which was too tempting to

resist." I gave them chairs and tried to appear as pleasant as possible. The daughter walked to the silver closet and found it empty; her mother upon learning this burst into tears saying: "Oh! we are ruined! ruined! all my silverware is gone. I had over two thousand dollars worth and it is all gone, stolen." "You are mistaken Madam, you will find that everything is quite safe, I will show you." I led them to the bedroom, unlocked the door and invited them to enter; the room was littered with all the most valuable things the house contained; I raised the feather-bed, there lay all the beautiful silverware so much lamented. "Now madam, you see the Yankees are not so bad after all." The old lady was so overjoyed she fell on her knees and thanked God and sobbed aloud for having been preserved from the enemy in such a miraculous way; rising with tears in her eyes she thanked me again and again, her gratitude knew no bounds; however after, she overcame her emotion; I took her around the place and showed her where everything was and finally took her in the milkhouse and showed her the milk, cream and lastly the forty pound crock of nice fresh yellow butter I had put down, then I told her I was ready to leave. "No, not while I have a roof over my head," but I explained I had a family etc. but she persuaded me to stay at least while I was in Clarksburg, to which I did till marching orders to go back to New Creek and additional orders for the women to remain behind as the regiment was going to fight; but I was not going to stay behind. Oh! no, I must go too, but before I had time to form my plans for a stolen passage among the soldiers, Capt. Fitzgerald came hurriedly: "Get ready Mrs. Silk, and hurry and get in that car and I will see that you are smuggled under the robes unknown to the others." Imagine, my readers, smug



gling me, a woman weighing one hundred and eighty pounds; but however I felt courageous and was going to follow and fight too if necessary. After I was I may say uncomfortably packed under the tents and blankets in one corner of the car, my heart the biggest part of me and just room enough to breathe, in came the Col. Captain. have you any women of the Company on board?" "No sir, step in and see." He then asked the soldiers: "Have you any women aboard?" "No sir, I have not seen any," came the answer. After the general bustle and hurry the "all aboard" was cried and with a whistle of the engine and jolt of the cars we were again on our way back to New Creek and I was saved. After a long and tedious journey of about three hundred miles we reached our station; it is needless to say I felt cramped and worn out; the soldiers began unloading their baggage and out I came with the rest; the Col. stepped up: "Hello, Mrs. Silk how did you get here?" "On the cars of course Col." He never said a word, he see I was determined to follow, while the other soldiers were kicking themselves on think ing of their wives left behind, and it was three weeks before they could send for them.

It was night when we reached New Creek the second time our camp was then called Camp Komosky; our tents were pitched near a small hill. I noticed a stong smell of something; I asked my husband what it was, he supposed some dead horse lay around, he would see in the morning. I looked around, I percieved my head had been pillowed on the foot of a dead man only partly buried. There had been a battle some time before and the dead soldiers lay all around; you may imagine my reader, that we pitched our tent a little further on without waiting for breakfast. The same day our soldiers were put to work, digging pro



per trenches and collecting these poor unfortunates to sling them in like dogs. Oh! where was humanity? while far from these poor wretches in humble but peaceful homes many anxious hearted wives and sorrowing mothers and sisters watched and waited day after day for one word from their dear one which never came, for he lay stretched on the field soaked in his own blood which was now dried up by the scorching August sun.

Here our soldiers built their fort. One night the beating of the long roll announced the advance of the enemy; every man flew to his arms, but my husband was sick in our tent, I took his gun and loaded it and stood guard at our tent, if a rebel should come I was going to down him; who should come up but Major Moore. I halted him and demanded the countersign; as it was night I could not distinguish who it was but feared it was some rebel scout, he replied "Major Moore, Mrs. Silk." I recognized his voice but I did not know the countersign myself but I was saved this time; a few moments later the soldiers returned laughing, they had had a false alarm. The next day the joke was among all the soldiers: "What is the countersign?" "Major Moore" invariably came the response. That fall the soldiers received their first pay money, then orders came that no women were to be allowed in the camp; the officers voted to see if this should be carried; there were a number of women who used considerable liquor gave it to soldiers and caused trouble among them.

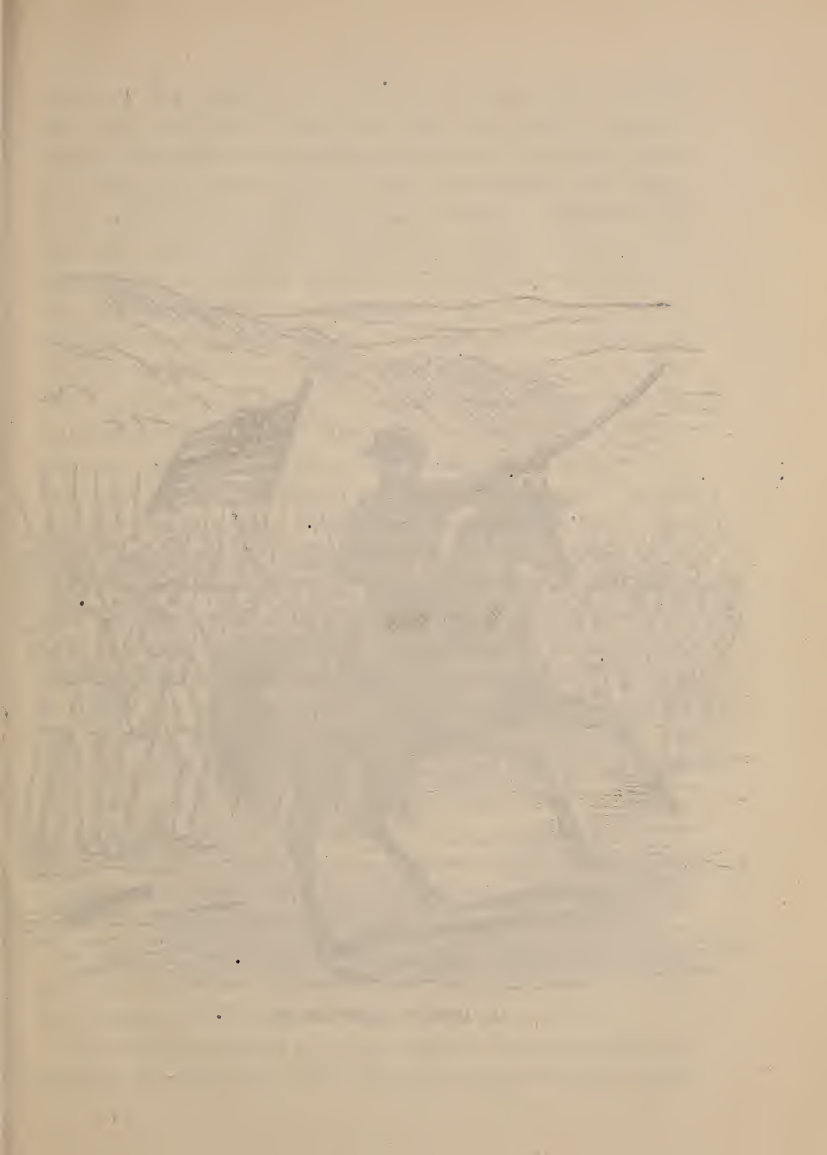
My Captain said he could not spare me, he would divide his rations if the Government would permit, it was finally decided that every woman should leave the camp; they were provided with transportations to their homes.

I went home of course, and remained ten days, then I

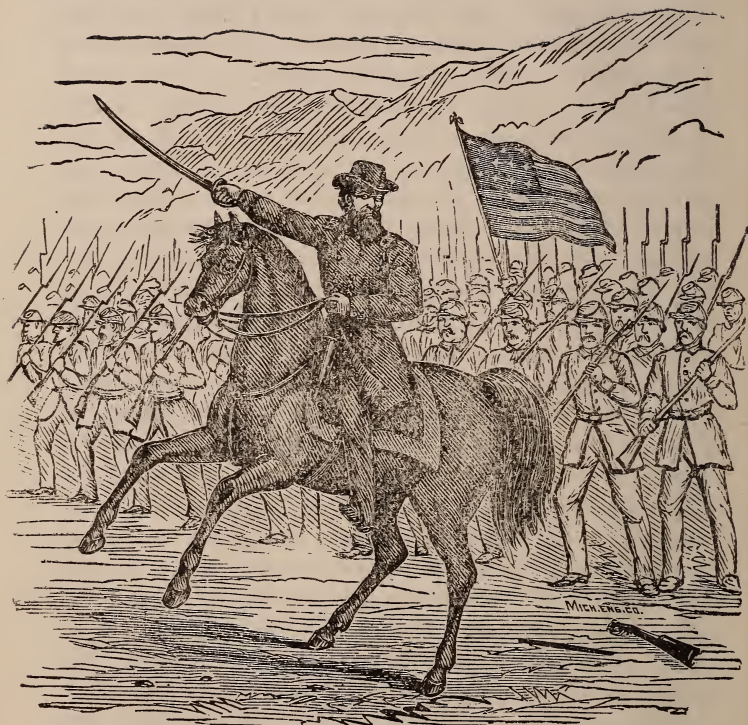
went back to the camp, ten days was as long as I could stand, I must be there myself and have a finger in the pie. I was heartily welcomed and greeted with many cheers and again provided with the necessities of life with splendid quarters. That winter I washed for one hundred men and kept an open table for the soldiers, there were 40,000 men camping, and in spring we resumed our marching. The fighting began pretty hot all around us; the cars were at our camp, the engines ready at a moments notice to take the army further ahead. Orders came to advance on Gen. Lee's army at Gettysburg and now was fought the immortal battle which time can never end the thrill of admiration we feel as we read the heroism of our noble patriots; for three days the battle was at its height. "Victory" seemed the motto on both sides; for three days Gen. Lee's army stood and had lost many thousand men till he was forced to retreat through the Potomac losing men, mules and wagons in it the Union Army followed him up about three hundred miles across the mountains to Cherry Run; here Gen. Lee got reinforcements and again surrounded us on all sides but the Potomac; we were then obliged to retreat through it with our guns on our heads; on the other side we then set our battery and sent a few shells across the mountains to the rebels' but they retreated and I was glad of it. I shall never be able to describe the sight which met my eyes when I went through the battle field with my pail of water giving drink to the wounded and dying who lay fallen across each other soldiers, horses and wagons lay in heaps on the scorching field. I have no doubt that many of my readers have seen the Cyclorama Battle of Gettysburg, when I seen it myself the scene was presented so real that I thought I was once more anxiously awaiting the return

of the troupes whom I could see afar across the fields and hear the distinct boom of the canon. My husband with the army had followed Lee across the mountains but the women and the Physicians remained, so we were obliged to engage a canal boat, as our ambulances were filled with wounded soldiers, to convey us to Cumberland, Ind. a distance of 300 miles; the canal was towed by horses and the road was a very long one. We had nothing to eat but salt bocan and ship crackers, we stopped at all the locks to procure milk and proper food for our sick but could not obtain entrance, we met only secesh; our sick were so miserable, I promised them at the first port we stopped if there were any farmers I should get milk and bread for them. At the first stop we made there was a wealthy plantation farm; I jumped off the boat and walked up to the house, the door was open and the lady of the house sat just inside; I politely asked her to sell me some bread and a gallon of milk—as luck had it she had just baked and I could see the bread on the table in the next room—I would pay her any price but I must have it as I had sick people aboard who would die, “No,” she answered, “get out of here you infernal Yankee-devil, you’re a disgrace to the country, I wish you were all dead” As luck had it there were no men about the place and I was about as strong as she was, I looked at the bread in the next room on the table and then at her, I said “Now Madam, I am going to have some of that bread and milk” I was well protected, I had a first class seven shooter and I got it in sight; “Now take money or move and you get this, I am going to have some bread and milk.” I went out backwards and took three loaves out of the five keeping the revolver ready in my hand. “Now, how much money do I owe you?” “I will take 5.00 in secesh money

if you have any, if not get out," she answered. "No, I dont carry such trash, but I have genuine greenbacks and plenty of them I am pround to say." I hurried down to the boat and threw the bread into the doctors hands and went back to the milkhouse; meanwhile my friend thought she had got rid of me, but nay, not so, I looked around and there under a large oak tree stood a cozy little milkhouse snugly built. I looked further and there too and behold! I saw my friend coming towards me with an axe. I had a large pail and was about to empty a crock of milk into it; she came up closer and thre w the axe at me; I dodged it and let her have the contents of one chamber of my revolver at her feet; I did not intend to wound her but I would frighten her into letting me have what I wanted, however the bullet went through her foot, she sat quietly down on the ground; I quickly filled my pail and went down to the boat and brought up the doctor to dress her foot, it was not very serious but she was glad to have a "yankee-devil" do that. I helped myself to eggs and butter for the sick; my friend acknowledged she was wrong. I came te her like a lady and she acted like a lion, as I would have paid her any price, but I should have what I wanted though; before I left I went to her and asked her, how much money she wanted, she answered: "Nothing, you have acted bravely for the sake of your wounded soldiers and I forgive you as I was wrong in acting as I did" So we parted good friends and I was well provide with nourishment until we reached Cumberland. I then took the car for New Creek; I had no news of my husband and was very anxious to know where the regiment was, I found out they marched 300 miles across the mountains till they come to Burlington, Vir. They camped there and the rebels being around they faught. I took the wagon







ADVANCE ON GETTYSBURG.



train for Burlington; on arriving I found my husband safe and well but completely done out, there was any amount of work for me among the wounded soldiers; there were many women rebel scouts coming into our camp to view our forces and camp, they would be captured and put into our guard house which was nothing more or less than a corn crib and a small one at that, when it was filled the prisoners would be sent across the line to Dayton, Ohio, or to some other prison; our men were scouring the country and we went on to camp at Moorfield, this was the year previous to the Emancipation, the secesh slave holders were selling off their slaves. One morning there was a great nigger auction going to take place, I seen them get upon the block and be auctioned off like cattle, some purchaser would lash them across the legs to start them running and exhibit their speed and to see if they were lame. I seen them sell the child to one and the mother to another whose tears and pleadings could not effect a claim on her child, poor old men separated from their wiwes, brothers from their sisters, I thought this the most barbarous act I ever beheld and I wondered that these people who were greater in number than their masters did not rise upon them in one mass and demand the right of independence which is one of the first laws of nature, believing as they were taught to that they had a soul (just as much valued in the sight of God as their master's) and having a body and mind which were capable of experiencing the same emotion as those who treated them like dogs; still I have met with many of the plantation negreos who remember these days as the happiest of their lives though they now possess the liberty to which they are entitled.

We recieved orders to march across the mountains and capture the Gurrella. I was forced to return to New Creek

being unable to march; the regiment had quite a heavy battle at Grafton, Vir. and were building entrenchments, I took the train from New Creek to Grafton and found them camping in the woods, my husband as well as the others had a small hole dug in the ground to hide in nights, they were unprovided with tents so they had no quarters for women; the Captain came to me and said I had better go into the neighboring schoolhouse as it was not safe for me around, they might fight any minute, so another woman and I went into the schoolhouse. About 12 o'clock that night I heard the beating of the long roll, in less time than I can write they were ready to fight; a great many of our men were killed and a large number wounded; the fight lasted about three hours; reinforcement had been telegraphed for and arrived before morning. 300 rebels were taken prisoners and the remainder run. My quarters were only about 40 rods from the field and the canon balls and shells went through the poor old school house till I was afraid it would fall and crush me under it, so when morning came and I see them return bearing the flag of truce I was as glad to see peace proclaimed as any one. All the wounded were brought into the school house and I was again kept busy helping the surgeons in their painful duty of amputating arms and limbs until I became quite hardened to such scenes,

We were again ordered to New Creek and then to Petersburg, we were here two months doing duty, the rebels were all around us but no serious battles took place; my tent was very cold and I fell sick; I lost my voice, I was unable to speak a loud word for three months, still I continued to wash for one hundred men during the whole winter. On one occasion I remember, it was a bitter cold night and the wind blew with a terrible force; we were

living in one small shanty and there were several others all in a row but I occupied the first one and the wind had full sway, all at once a terrific gale swept up and took the roof off mine and deposited it rather roughly on my neighbors, the man run out in his night clothes, very thin ones I tell you, with no shoes on his feet. "My God" he exclaimed, "the rebels are on top of my house," but no it was only the roof of mine, he had no occasion to be so put out about it, he was better off than I, he had two roofs while I had none; I was obliged to take my bedding and stove and move further on, to the next shanty. I remember a woman who had enlisted with her husband as a soldiers, they passed for two brothers, one cold night one of the brothers was on picket and was suddenly taken very sick he was brought to the camp and put in the hospital; It was discovered that this brother was the others wife and before morning a fine little captain was born to the surprise and pleasure of the other brother; she was loudly cheered for her patriotism and well cared for in the hospital till her recovery when she was discharged and recieved a large bounty, but she remained with her husband till the end of the war. I afterwards heard the government allowed her a pension for her patriotism.

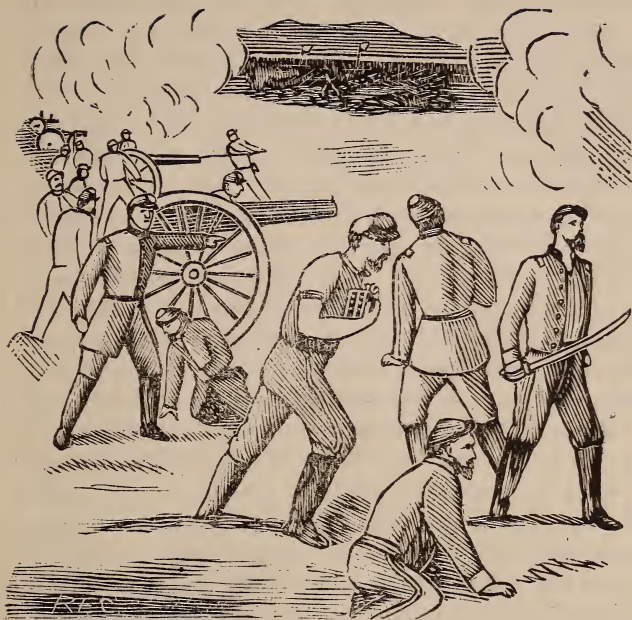
Orders now came to return to New Creek and take nothing with us. Flour, coffee, sugar and crackers were emptied barrell upon barrell on the ground, and I picked up as fast almost as they emptied, till my little shanty was filled with groceries; then this order was countermanded and for a week the soldiers were on quarter rations till more came up but I had sufficient for myself and company too. At that time a five hundred wagon train was coming from New Creek to Petersburg, loaded with provisions, clothing and ammunition. Company "I" was sent

to meet the train and blockade the cross roads with fallen trees to keep back Gen. Lee who was advancing with his cavalry to capture the train, but Lee advanced on them and captured it, his force was 18,000 ours 200.

Company "I" was ordered to retreat to the woods; when they seen Lee advancing with such a cavalry, some of the reb's followed but being night only six were captured, one being my husband, but he and three others got away.

I was at Petersburg and during the time my husband went to guard the train; I heard a noise and rattling outside, the doctor came and rapped hurriedly at my shanty telling me to get ready and prepare to leave the camp as quietly as possible, Lee was advancing with his cavalry and I should get in the ambulance with the surgeons and physicians, I had done a quantity of cooking that day and was glad I had done so, I felt as though I should require a quantity of cooked food, I packed all my effects in the ambulance and got in myself; many women were left crying and sobbing behind, others more courageous were following at the side of their husband on foot and when a stream of water was to be crossed the soldiers would carry their wives across; it was a sad scene and my heart ached for these poor women walking in the mud and water in January, for forty miles through the mountains back to New 'reek; our mules were so heavily loaded that picks, shovels clothing and provisions were thrown off, the roads were so bad although eight mules were harnessed to each wagon; in the morning we stopped to breakfast and feed our mules, our wagon train measured about fifteen miles long. After breakfast we continued our journey till we reached a small canton, here the officers were all looking for beds, one of the doctors got off





### THIS CUT

which ought to appear on page 23rd., give an eye view of the great battle where Sheridan arrived and reinforced by Col. Mulligan, ordered an immediate advance and attacking the Confederates now busy plundering the captured camp routed them with tremendous slaughter. This Campaign which lasted a little more than a month was one of the most brilliant of the war. Sheridan lost seventeen thousand men but he had virtually destroyed Early's Army; this was the last attempt to threaten Washington.





at a large house and said to the lady: "Here I must have supper and a bed for my mother who is coming." He then came out and brought me in. "Is this your mother? you're a pretty old man to have such a young looking mother." "Well no matter, she is as good as a mother." I had rested about two hours when some one rapped hurriedly at my door: "Get up Mrs. Silk at once, the rebs are after us and we must leave here as quick as possible," we were soon loaded and on our way, we travelled until we reached Greenland, Gap., there we stopped to breakfast, we were just seated, when Lieut. Col. Kirk drove up and announced that Company 'I' was all killed and captured, I felt sick, where was my husband? I had enough breakfast I felt as though I must go over the mountains in search of him, the Col. said I must not attempt to leave the wagon or he would put a guard over me, before I could make a stir Tom Quinn a soldier of Company I, came running up to me saying: "Your husband is all right, Mrs. Silk, he is coming further back." I felt like a new woman my husband had heard through Col. Corbin that his wife was coming on a wagon train, so he began looking through every car and for fifteen miles a fire could be seen in every corner of the fences, where the soldiers were getting their breakfast; I looked out and way off as far as I could see in the distance, I recognized my poor husband toggging along, the miserable rebels had stripped him of every stitch of good clothing and taken even the shoes from his feet. I called at the top of my voice to him, he heard and seen me, I got him in the ambulance with me and rigged him out in dry clothing and made him lay down under the blankets hidden from the Col. so he rode the rest of the way to New Creek, on arriving there I found a small shanty, rigged it up and lived there the following

day my husband was ordered back to Greenland, Gap., and I was again left alone, I heard from the regiment every day, however, after a few weeks my husband came to New Creek, he stayed longer than his permit, and when he returned to Greenland Gap, they were enlisting veterans, my husband refused to enlist as veteran so he was sent back to New Creek under a guard for having stayed away one day over his time, he came to me and I gave him dry clothing, after having walked twenty miles in the mud and rain, he was then taken to the guard house, after he was gone I took the lantern and went straight to Col. Mulligan, on seeing me he said: "Why, Mrs. Silk, what are you out this time of night for?" "Good reasons why Col." I then laid down the story of my husband's wrongs then added: "T'is well for you Col, you are contented here with your wife and family." "Very well, Mrs. Silk, I understand, I will give you an order to get your husband out," so I worked my point all right, I got him out; he remained home six weeks, he then got orders to go back to his regiment. I stayed home, I had a sergeants wife living with me, I washed and mended for the soldiers; on the 14th. of April my little son was born. The soldiers were fighting all around me. Orders came for the regiment to march back to New Creek; then the regiment who had enlisted as veterans were going to Chicago on a furlough, a number of them were married while in service to Southern women, and of course refused to take their wives with them as they already had one in Chicago; after thirty days they returned, they were ready for the front, This was in 64, my health being very poor I thought I would go home to Michigan for a rest, I was home ten days, I went back with my baby to the regiment then at Winchester. The regiment was ordered

front to Martinsburg and Col. Mulligan remarked he would go front if he never returned, and he never did. They were fighting in the Shanandoah Valley, Rebel Gen Early against Gen. Sheridan, kept the field for six weeks, the rebels drove our forces back as far as Harpers Ferry, it was here that poor Col. Mulligan fell at Kernstown, the last words he murmured were: "boys save the flag, never mind me." Worthy utterance from a noble heart. I arrived on the battle field my baby in one arm and a pail of water on the other which I divided among the wounded about ten thousand in number, but the women here were all taken prisoners myself in the bargain. While the dead were being buried Mrs. Col. Mulligan came on the field bearing the flag of truce to claim the body of her dead husband which she obtained and buried in Chicago.

The women who were taken prisoners were kept each one in a separate tent and each having a guard. I was very weak and sick and my guard was an old good hearted Irishman, I had nothing to eat but ship crackers and very few of them; I felt exhausted with no better nourishment I complained to him, he said he would get me something to eat if it could be got; I had about one hundred and fifty dollars about me when the rebels captured me they took the money and my best clothing and blankets from me. My guard was true to his promise he brought me a nice fat chicken. "There Agrha" he said, "you shall have something more fit for you to eat." I cooked my chicken and relished that for a couple of days. One morning who should drive up to the tent but Gen. Early, he looked in my tent and asked the guard whom he had there, I came to the door with my baby and said: "Gen. are you fighting with women or men? why are you keeping me here?" "I was not aware we had any women prisoners; what

were you doing in the army? I answered: "I followed my husband to nurse the sick and work for the Stars and Stripes." "Was this baby born here?" "Yes sir, born on the battle field." "Well" he said "you are a true trump and deserve better care than you get here, can you ride to Harpers Ferry?" "No, I could not stand the jolt, my money and goods were taken from me by your soldiers." He inquired of my guard who brought me there, he would try and obtain my money from them; the next day he brought me fifty dollars and if he could find the ones who took my money they should be severely punished; he told my guard to take me out of the tent and help me to walk around and to take care of me. I said to him: "My soldiers will soon come after me, the Yankees wo'nt leave you here long." "Perhaps they will." He asked me if I knew where my husband was, I said "No, he may be dead on the battle field, I cannot tell." He told my guard to help me get around on the field and see if he was there but I could find no trace of him anywhere.

The following morning my guide came in my tent and said "we will have to run now and I am afraid faster than ever." "Why, are the Union soldiers coming?" I asked, "come and see for yourself" and sure enough the shells were coming nearer and faster; we were then ordered into the cellar to avoid the shells, the rebels set their hospitals on fire to prevent the Union soldiers from getting them but the Yankees drove the rebels seven miles beyond Winchester.

The first object that met my eyes on emerging from the cellar was my husband looking around among the tents for me so he was still alive and believed me dead, I screamed at the top of my voice when I saw him; the army remained here for two weeks, we got quarters in a







PUNISHMENT INFLICTED ON MALE OFFENDERS.

house. The soldiers again began burying their dead, we had about three miles square of hospitals. Nevertheless there were about 200000 men remaining after the battle about one hundred and fifty out of our regiment which formerly contained fourteen hundred. They were marching four days passing from Winchester through the city to Richmond, this is what was called the 6th. Army Corps under Gen. Sheridan, they loaded their baggage on all the cows they could find and took everything they could lay their hands on, they left the Valley destitute of everything.

My husband being very sick we only marched as far as Harpers Ferry, we reached there at night and went into the hospital, which was formly a wool factory but now contained 15000 wounded. I secured a house near the hospital for myself and obtained my rations there. One morning I walked out on Boliver Heights near the roadside I saw eight or nine men at work erecting something; I inquired what they were doing, they answered they were building a scaffold to hang John French a Gurella. I stood and watched them work for some time, while I was looking on, the ambulance slowly drove up and the guards who walked each side beat the dead march for the unfortunate victim who sat inside the wagon; a smart young man came out of the ambulance and bravely walked up to the scaffold by the side of Father Gilligan, a Catholic priest; he was asked if he had anything to say, he answered in broken English which made his language more touching: "I came from France to see America not to fight, I am not a Union man or a secesh, in my country I was a Republican; on arriving in New York I drank too freely of wine and beer and before I knew it I was enlisted in the 4th. New York Cavalry, I was poorly treated and when I

got down south I had hoped to make my way back to France, but I was forced in the secesh army, however I escaped and hid in the woods for several days, I was without food, finally Capt. Mosbey captured me with his band of Gurella with whom I was forced to remain, but I never fired a gun on either side; immediately after my escape from Cap. Mosbey I was captured by the Union Soldiers on London Heights; now I am ready to die, I must pay the penalty of my folly with my life. Father, (to the Priest) write to my father in France and tell him I die an innocent man," He blessed himself and as the drop fell the rope broke, he was not yet dead, he muttered: "Oh shoot me! shoot me!" but they tied the rope and let him down carefully and this time the fatal deed was done, his soul was before his God. How my heart ached for this poor unfortunate in a strange country, without kindred or friend to speak one affectionate word of farewell; I could not look on the scene, I turned away and beheld the beauties of nature around me; it was in the fall and as the wind stirred the branches of the trees and fluttered the leaves, the bright sun shone on them and brought out all their beautifully varied tints, a beautiful scene to behold such a tragedy; the tears chased each other down my face, how sad and inhuman without trial or chance to save himself; they buried him there near the scaffold and so ended one more of whom the world was ignorant. I walked home feeling disgusted with life. The following morning the Provost Marshal Cap. Pratt who had condemned Johh French, was found dead under a bridge, he had one friend and that one had avenged his death.

Shortly after orders came from Washington that every deserter should be shot and every day or so some deserter

was shot. On one occasion seven soldiers were brought to the guard house supposed to be deserters, they were court marshaled and condemned to be shot, one a young boy of fourteen years; the Priest visited them every day for about three weeks, he had been a schoolmate of the Presidents when they were boys together, and the night previous to the shooting the Priest telegraphed to the President to release the prisoners, they would be good soldiers. In the morning the muffled drum beating and the band playing the dead march started for Boliver Heights with the seven victims following and their coffins.

The Priest encouraged them telling them Heaven had not forgotten them and bid them not to give up hope, on reaching the Heights the seven coffins were placed in a line and all knelt on their coffins, on their breast, each one had a peice of paper fastened as a target; at a distance of fifty yards there stood a heart broken wife and children who had come from New York to save if possible or bid her husband farewell; ten minutes only were left before the time appointed for shooting, the grief of the wife and children is beyond description, d thane sobs of the soldier boy on his knees begging pardon of his mother who was far away, for having left home in spite of all her tears and pleadings, was heart rending. The guards were ordered to bind the prisoners, and still the Priest encouraged and gave solace, and suddenly a bugle was heard such as are used by the cavalry, a horse was seen coming at full spead towards the place of execution, the rider had his hankkerchief tied to the end of his sword for a signal; every heart stopped beating. The Priest turned to his people saying: "Hope; life is yet yours and God is good." Our horse and rider were now at hand, he passed a despatch to the commander, the or-

der was from Washington to release the prisoners; when the news was read aloud, the poor boy fell on his knees before the Priest and promised always to obey his mother in everything in the future; while the poor wife and children rushed into the arms of their loved one and their sobs were turned to tears of joy. There was not a dry eye in the whole assembly of people there. Their hands were soon unbound and they left the scene which spoke of such horrors they had just escaped. The soldiers took three days rations and were sent front to their regiment now at Richmond.

Orders then came from Washington that no more deserters should be shot,

Rebel Gen. O'Neal now made a raid on Harpers Ferry, there was a terrible slaughter on both sides, in one place a young man recognized his father whom he had just shot in a shirmish, he threw up his gun and held his father till the ambulance came; meanwhile the rebels had retreated.

The day following three secesh women came into the camp selling whiskey to the soldiers, they were captured, and for their punishment they were ordered to walk with the guards and a board fastened around their neck containing these words: "walking distilleries."

In the Spring my husband's time was up but he could not obtain his discharge at Harpers Ferry and when we reached Richmond everything was on fire, Lee had just left the place followed by Gen. Grant. My husband and I camped about half a mile from the city, there were few in the regiment whom I knew being all new officers and I stood a poor chance; as luck would have it, one day my husband was on picket and he found two chickens and some green corn and I was preparing a feast fit for the



gods, in the camp Kittle outside my tent. Gen. Grant came riding by accompanied by his staff, they looked around at my camp Kittle, I had about made up my mind to lose my dinner, they stopped a short distance further and pitched their tent, they thought they would camp for dinner too, he sent his orderly to me asking for a bowl of soup; I devided with him and still had sufficient for myself; he next sent his coat to me to sew some buttons on it, he was going into Washington and must at least have buttons on it, I said I had no conveniences for tailoring and he must wait till arrived in the city, "Why, that is Gen. Grant," "I do'nt care, he is no better than my husband only he draws more pay." The General was within hearing and answered back: "Bravo! that is very true and he works as hard as myself." When I returned his coat he thanked me and gave me loud praise for such bravery as I had showed; he took my name and told me if ever he should come into power in Washington and I wanted anything, I should write and ask him.

Peace was now proclaimed and my husband and I were waiting for his discharge and pay; on the 26th. of June he recieved both, then we started for home, Ann Arbor, great preparations were being made for the reception of the return soldiers, a free dinner was given on the 4th. of July to about 10,000 people; I was invited by William S. Maynard, the mayor of Ann Arbor, to sit at his table, I was crowned queen of the occasion as I was the only lady in the county who had been to the war.

So now I must give my gentle reader the parting hand of friendship, we have had a long and I hope interesting journey, I trust not an unprofitable one; we have travelled over the ground of battle-scenes of blood, carnage and slaughter; our time together has passod pleasantly yet

sadly, and so ends the Campaign of a woman who only asks your pardon for the many defects and weakness in her simple narrative, and who also hopes it may amuse the young and the old,

Is the prayer of your humble

and dutiful servant,

MRS. JULIA SILK.

"We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told"  
 "us what work thou did'st in their days, in the times of old."  
 "For they got not their land in possession by their own sword"  
 "neither did their own arm save them. But thy right hand"  
 "and thine arm and the light of thy countenance because thou"  
 "hadst a favor unto them.—Psalm X li v 1. 3,





